

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENNA 04874 161726Z
ACTION NODS-00

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S E C R E T VIENNA 4874

NODIS

FOR HARTMAN FROM CHARGE

EO 11652: XGDS-2,3
TAGS: CASC, UR, US
SUBJECT: CHILEAN PRISONER EXCHANGE

REF: VIENNA 4816

1. I MET WITH VOGEL IN WEST BERLIN THE EVENING OF JUNE 15.
I CONVEYED OUR PROPOSAL ALONG LINES OF STATE 121175, PARA 8,
AS AMENDED BY STATE 131842, PARA 3.

2. VOGEL WAS DEFINITELY INTERESTED. HE SAID THE ACTION
ON HIS SIDE WOULD PROBABLY BEGIN WHEN CORVALAN RETURNS NEXT
WEEK TO EAST BERLIN FROM CUBA. HE WAS SURE HONECKER WOULD
WANT TO DISCUSS THE MATTER PERSONALLY WITH CORVALAN.
HONECKER IS INTERESTED IN THE RELEASE OF IMPRISONED COM-
MUNISTS (VOGEL MENTIONED A SPECIFIC HONECKER INTEREST IN
URUGUAYAN PRISONERS). THE RUSSIANS WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE
THE DECISIVE FACTOR. VOGEL WAS NOT SURE OF THEIR REACTION.
THE DEAL WOULD BE POLITICALLY SENSITIVE, BUT FOR WHAT IT
WAS WORTH, HE THOUGHT HONECKER AND CORVALAN WOULD
TRY TO MOVE IT FORWARD. HE WOULD PHONE ME AS SOON
AS HE HAD ANYTHING TO REPORT.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 VIENNA 04874 161726Z

3. VOGEL ASKED IF WE WERE SURE ALL THE RUSSIAN
PRISONERS WANT TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY. I SAID I WAS
NOT. HE SAID PRESUMABLY THE SAME QUESTION AROSE CON-
CERNING THE CHILEAN PRISONERS. WE ALSO TOUCHED ON THE
EMIGRATION OF FAMILY MEMBERS, IN ADDITION TO THE
PRISONERS THEMSELVES. PRESUMABLY THIS QUESTION WOULD
ARISE IF THE PROPOSAL, OR ANY PART OF IT, WERE CARRIED

OUT. VOGEL ASKED IF WE HAD ANY IDEA AS TO WHERE EX-CHANGES MIGHT TAKE PLACE. I SAID I HAD NO INSTRUCTIONS ON THIS, AND HE SUGGESTED BERLIN WOULD BE AS GOOD A PLACE AS ANY.

4. TURNING TO OTHER SUBJECTS, VOGEL TOLD ME HE HOPED TO EXCHANGE MONTES FOR TWO EAST GERMAN PRISONERS THIS COMING WEEKEND. HE GAVE THE NAMES OF THE PRISONERS AS FRUCHT AND WEIHE. HE SAID BOTH WERE DIFFICULT CASES. FRUCHT HAD BEEN IN PRISON SINCE THE 50'S, WEIHE SINCE THE 60'. BOTH HAD WORKED FOR U.S. INTELLIGENCE, HE CLAIMED. FRUCHT HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN EAST GERMAN CHEMICAL WARFARE RESEARCH AND HAD APPARENTLY SUPPLIED INTELLIGENCE TO THE U.S. OVER A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD. THE PROSECUTOR HAD ASKED FOR THE DEATH PENALTY, BUT FRUCHT HAD BEEN GIVEN A LIFE SENTENCE.

5. ON HIS OTHER DEALINGS WITH THE WEST GERMANS (I GATHERED THE LATTER HAD PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN THE MONTES-FRUCHT-WEIHE EXCHANGE), VOGEL SAID AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED FOR THE RELEASE OF 1500 PRISONERS FROM THE GDR DURING THE SECOND HALF OF THIS YEAR. HE CLEARLY REGARDED THE DEAL AS A MAJOR ACHIEVEMENT. HE SAID THE FAMILIES OF THE PRISONERS WOULD ALSO BE PERMITTED TO LEAVE THE GDR.

6. VOGEL RAISED SHADRIN HIMSELF, WITHOUT ANY PROMPTING FROM ME, NOTING AT THE OUTSET THAT HE HAD NO AUTHORITY TO NEGOTIATE IN THE CASE, OR EVEN LISTEN ANY MORE TO
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 VIENNA 04874 161726Z

WHAT COPAKEN MIGHT HAVE TO SAY. HE THEN REPEATED ESSENTIALLY SOME OF THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS HE HAD GIVEN ME A YEAR AGO, WITHOUT ADDING ANY NEW ELEMENTS. STRESSING THAT IT WAS A PURELY PERSONAL VIEW, HE SAID THE MORE HE CONSIDERED THE CASE, THE MORE HE THOUGHT SHADRIN WENT BACK OF HIS OWN ACCORD. THE SUPPORTING EVIDENCE CONTINUED TO BE, VOGEL SAID, THE COMPLETE LACK OF CONCERN--WHICH WAS SURPRISING TO HIM--ON THE EASTERN SIDE ABOUT POSSIBLE WESTERN EXPOSURE OF THE CASE. HE SAID HE FOUND PEOPLE ON HIS SIDE QUITE RELAXED ABOUT THIS PROSPECT, AND HE COULD ONLY INFER THEY FELT THEY WERE IN A STRONG POSITION. HE SPECULATED AGAIN THAT IF WE BROUGHT UP THE CASE, THEY MIGHT PRODUCE SHADRIN AS A LIVING REBUTTAL OF ABDUCTION CHARGES, AND THIS WOULD MAKE US LOOK PRETTY FOOLISH. VOGEL SAID HE HAD GONE OVER AND OVER THE CASE AND ALWAYS CAME BACK TO THIS LINE OF THOUGHT. HE HIMSELF THOUGHT THERE WAS A WEAKNESS IN HIS OWN THEORY. HE WONDERED WHY THE RUSSIANS HAD NOT LEAKED SHADRIN'S RECALL AND

VOLUNTARY RETURN, IF THAT IS WHAT IT WAS, TO WESTERN

MEDIA SO AS TO SCOTCH THE WHOLE CASE BEFORE IT
COULD ASSUME SERIOUS PROPORTIONS. WE KICKED THIS
ABOUT SOME. I SAID I DID NOT THINK HIS OBJECTION
RULED HIS THEORY OUT. THE RUSSIANS WERE GOOD AT
WAITING THINGS OUT, AND PERHAPS THEY HOPED THEY
WOULD NOT HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE CASE PUBLICLY AT ALL.

SOME ON THE RUSSIAN SIDE WOULD PROBABLY ARGUE IT WAS A
NO-LOSE SITUATION FOR THEM. FINALLY, VOGEL SAID THAT,
ALTHOUGH HE HAD NO OFFICIAL ROLE TO PLAY ON SHADRIN,
HE WOULD CONTINUE TO KEEP AN EYE ON THE CASE AND LET
ME KNOW IF HE HEARD ANYTHING INTERESTING. MEEHAN

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